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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

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First Named Inventor James RUSSELL

Art Unit 1634

Examiner Name Amanda Marie Shaw

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indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In response applicants have amended the base claim to provide clarity and consistency in the claims.

In particular, applicants have amended the preamble to clearly define that a first and second fiber optic links as define in the specification on page 6 line 18 to page 7 line 2. The first splitting section has been clarified with support found on page 7, line 16 – 19, page 12, line 21-22 to page 13 line 1 -2. In addition, the add/drop section has been clarity to define that working channels are received from the first splitting section as disclosed on page 8, line 2-4 and page 13, line 1-2. Finally, the first switching section has been defined to clarify that which the Office Action found unclear. Other dependent claims 3, 4, 5 9 -14 have been similarly amended. Support for this amendment can be found on page 9 line 5 to 10 and page 13 line 3-10. No new matter was added in the amendment to the base claim.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Onaka (US 2004/0076426) or Cadeddu (US 5,647,035). In response, applicants have amended the base claims and provide the following comments.

Claim 1, as amended, now recites a two-fiber optical ring network having a plurality of nodes linked by a first fiber optic link and a second fiber optic link and each

fiber optic link including a plurality of protection and working channels, each of the nodes comprising, inter alia, a first switching section a first switching section for combining the protection channels received from the first splitting section with the working channels traveling through the first fiber optic link when there is no link failure between adjacent nodes and for outputting the protection channels received from the first splitting section to the second fiber optic link when there is a link failure between adjacent nodes.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that neither Cadeddu nor Onaka teach combining the protection channels with working channels as taught by the present invention and now as recited in the amended base claim. Applicants agree that no such feature of combining working and protection channels are taught or suggested by Onaka. As illustrated in Onaka, FIG. 42 working and protection channels are split between 32 channels in the OADM DEVICE 42. Additionally, Cadeddu fails to teach or suggest the combing of protection and combining channels as found in the amended base claims. As illustrated in Cadeddu, FIG. 3-4, the Cadeddu device separates working and protection channels between the OADM 13 not combing the channels. Therefore, both Cadeddu and Onaka fail to teach a first switching section a first switching section for combining the protection channels received from the first splitting section with the working channels traveling through the first fiber optic link when there is no link failure between adjacent nodes and for outputting the protection channels received from the first splitting section to the second fiber optic link when there is a link failure between adjacent nodes as recited in the base claim. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this ground of rejection.